J-1 Orientation

A) J-1 Certification (DS-2019)

J-1 Scholars are expected to read and comply with the “Instructions for, and Certification By, the Alien Beneficiary” on Page Two of their DS-2019 form. By signing page one of the DS-2019 form, scholars certify that they understand, and will follow the legal requirements as outlined by the U.S. Department of State.

B) J-1 Program Validation

New Scholars must attend the Mandatory J-1 Scholar Orientation at 11am the first Thursday they are in the United States to be validated in the government database (SEVIS). In order to be validated, J-1 scholars must bring their local address, along with originals and clear copies of the following legal documents to Orientation:

- Original Bank Statement / Original Proof of Funding Letter (only if J-1 Program is not funded by MSU)
- Passport
- Visa
- I-94
- DS-2019
- Medical Insurance, including evacuation and repatriation coverage

*J-2 Dependents: J-1 Scholars are responsible for submitting the aforementioned legal documents for their dependents at the J-1 Orientation. These documents must be submitted before the J-1 Scholar program can be validated in the government database.

Federal Regulations require that CGS have the most recent legal documents (listed above) within J-1 scholar files at all times. It is the responsibility of the J-1 scholar to submit these legal documents to CGS, and to ensure that these documents remain valid for both J-2 dependents and the J-1 Scholar.

C) J-1 Significance of Legal Documents

- **Original Bank Statement / Original Proof of Funding Letter:** Federal regulations require that a current and certified original funding document be placed within each scholar file as proof that the scholar has the financial means to support his/her J-1 program.
- **Passport:** Confirms legal residency in home country. Must be valid 6 months into the future to maintain legal status in the United States (U.S.). Renewals can be processed within the U.S. by contacting the J-1 Scholar’s embassy for instructions.
- **Visa:** Allows scholars to legally enter the United States. Must be valid each time the J-1 Scholar and J-2 Dependents re-enter the U.S. Check visa for expiration date, and allowable number of entries (usually M for multiple; or 1 or 2 visits). If the visa expires while the J-1 Scholar and J-2 Dependents are within the U.S., the J-1 program is still legitimate, as long as the DS-2019 form is valid, and the J-1 Scholar is maintaining all other aspects of J-1 legal status. Visas can only be renewed outside of the United States, and preferably within the J-1 Scholar’s home country.
- **I-94 Form:** Verifies that J-1 Scholar and J-2 Dependents legally entered and departed the United States on the J-1 program. Must always check at port of entry to be sure the following notation is made: J-1 D/S, or J-2 D/S. If a mistake in the notation is made, please contact the J-1 Adviser immediately.
- **DS-2019:** Confirms the validity of the J-1 program for both the Scholar and his/her J-2 Dependents.
- **Medical Insurance:** Federal regulations mandate that insurance must be valid for both the J-1 Scholar and J-2 Dependents during the entire duration of the J-1 program.

D) J-1 Program Modifications

Unless otherwise stated below, federal regulations require that all J-1 program modifications be reported to CGS immediately. Program modifications must be authorized through SEVIS, and a new DS-2019 must be issued before the date of the program change. J-1 Scholars who fail to report program modifications immediately risk losing their legal status. J-1 Scholars are required to report the following changes:
1) Address: Report to CGS within 10 days of relocation via email (johnson.niba@morgan.edu).
2) Financial Information: Failure to report financial modifications before receiving payment can result in termination of J-1 legal status.
3) **Addendum to Site of Activity And Changes to Terms & Conditions of Initial Employment:** Report to CGS at least 10 days prior to participating in MSU or non-MSU paid/unpaid activities (such as outside lab work, research, lectures, conference presentations, and teaching). Failure to do so before can result in termination of J-1 legal status. Please refer to Section E of this ‘Maintaining Legal Status’ document for details on the approval process.
4) Unauthorized Employment
5) Adding Dependents: Report to MSU Department to complete appropriate paperwork.
6) Program Extension: Report to MSU Department at least 6 weeks before the J-1 program end date. CGS must receive the extension request in its office at least 4 weeks prior to the extension date.
7) Program Shortened
8) Program Completion Abroad
9) Program Objective
10) 212(e): If scholar has received approval of 212(e), he/she must bring the approval notice to CGS.

**E) J-1 ADDENDUM TO SITE OF ACTIVITY AND CHANGES TO TERMS & CONDITIONS OF INITIAL EMPLOYMENT**

The DS-2019 is site specific, and only permits teaching and/or research activities as stated within the appointment letter issued by the Dean of each respective MSU Department. More specifically, J-1 scholars are legally authorized for employment only as noted in Parts 4 and 5 of their DS-2019 form. J-1 work authorization is also limited to the dates indicated in Part 3 of the DS-2019.

**AUTHORIZATION FOR ADDITIONAL PAID/UNPAID ACTIVITIES:** Federal authorization is required if the J-1 scholar will conduct activities that will be off campus, or if the scholar will participate in MSU OR non-MSU affiliated activities that were not approved within the original J-1 visa request. The Activity can only be authorized for a series of single events and cannot be ongoing. In addition, the Code of Federal Regulations stipulates that the Activity must:

- Be directly related to the objectives of the exchange visitor’s program;
- Be incidental to the scholar’s primary program objective;
- Not delay the completion of the exchange visitor’s program;
- Be occasional in nature;
- Be documented in SEVIS prior to participation in the activity (22 CFR § 62.20[g][1]).

In order to receive SEVIS approval, the scholar must complete the *Addendum to Site of Activity and Changes to Terms & Conditions of Initial Employment* form. Upon completing the form, the scholar must obtain Department and Division approval.

CGS will confirm SEVIS approval with the department, division, and scholar via email within 10 business days. CGS must receive the aforementioned form with supporting documents AT LEAST TEN BUSINESS DAYS BEFORE the activity begin date. This form must be completed for each activity.

**F) J-1 TRAVEL ABROAD**

To return to the U.S., all continuing J-1 scholars (and their J-2 dependents) must have the following items:
1. **SEVIS fee receipt.**
2. **Passport:** Must be valid 6 months into the future.
3. **Valid J Exchange Visitor Visa**: If visa will expire while out of country, exchange visitors must renew their J visas before U.S. reentry is permitted.
4. **Valid travel RO/ARO endorsement signature** on DS-2019 (Travel endorsements are valid for one year from the date of signature).

*Canadian citizens* are visa exempt, and only need a valid passport, DS-2019, and SEVIS payment receipt for reentry into the U.S.*

**G) J-1 LIMITATIONS OF STAY, PROGRAM COMPLETION, AND GRACE PERIODS**

**Limitations of Stay**
- J-1 Professors & Research Scholars: The maximum duration of stay is 5 years.
- J-1 Short Term Scholars: The maximum duration of stay is 6 months.

**Program Completion Procedures (J-1 Professors, Research Scholars, and Short Term Scholars)**
- J-1 scholars nearing their program completion date must email CGS (johnson.niba@morgan.edu) with their departure details (MSU departure date, U.S. departure date, departure location, flight information).

**J-1 Scholar Grace Period (J-1 Professors, Research Scholars, and Short Term Scholars)**
J-1 exchange visitors who have completed their program are eligible to stay within the U.S. for up to 30 days following their program completion date. The grace period can only be used for domestic travel, and/or to prepare for and depart the U.S., and for no other purpose (i.e. employment is not an option).

H) J-1 12 MONTH BAR, 24 MONTH BAR, & INA 212(e) HOME RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

- **12 Month Bar After Previous J Participation:** Exchange visitors are not eligible for the J-1 Professor / Research Scholar category if they were in J-visa status for any part of the 12-month period preceding their new J-1 program start date. The 12-month bar is waived if the participant is a) present in the United States no more than six months, or b) participating in the Short-Term Scholar category.
- **24 Month Bar on Repeat Participation:** J-1 Professor / Research Scholars are not eligible to return to the U.S. in the professor or research scholar category for a period of two years (24 months) following program completion.
- **INA 212(e), Home Residency Requirement:** If the J-1 exchange visitor is subject to the INA 212(e) requirement, they and their J-2 dependents are not eligible for an H, L, or K visa, nor for lawful permanent residency until they have returned to their home country for an aggregate of two-years, or received a waiver of the 212(e) requirement. Please see http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/info/info_1296.html for waiver eligibility.

Please review the U.S. Department of State 12- and 24-month bar chart on http://exchanges.state.gov/jexchanges/programs/professor.html.

I) J-2 DEPENDENTS

- **J-2 Dependent versus B-2 Visitor Visa:** Spouses and/or children who will not reside within the United States for the entire duration of the J-1 program (but visit for vacations only), may be eligible to apply for visitor (B-2) visas, or if qualified, travel without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program. Please refer to the U.S. Department of State link at http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1262.html for details.
- **Age Restrictions:** If the dependent is a child, this child must be under 21 years old to be eligible for the J-2 dependent category. There are no age restrictions for spouses.
- **Arrival:** J-2 dependents are permitted to apply for visas after the principal applicant has already started their J-1 program. Please visit your MSU Department to complete the appropriate paperwork. Please note that J-2 dependents may not enter the United States before the J-1 exchange visitor enters for the first time.
- **Employment:** J-2 dependents must be physically present in the U.S. before they are eligible to apply for work authorization. The J-2 should consider applying for work authorization at least 4 month before he/she intends to work. Please be mindful that J-2 dependents may not seek employment to support the J-1 scholar; J-2 dependents can only seek employment for supplementary income for themselves and other dependents. Application forms and sample letters should be submitted to USCIS at least 4 months before the J-2 intends to begin work.
- **Studying in the U.S.:** J-2 spouses and/or J-2 children may study in the U.S. without also being required to apply for a student visa.
- **J2 dependents are required to (if they are in the United States) share the same residence as the J1 participant.**
- **Travel:** J-2 dependents are subject to the same travel requirements as J-1 Scholars.
- **Departure Period:** J-2 dependent status terminates in the U.S. when that of the J-1 participant terminates. As such, J-2 dependents must depart prior to, or on the same date as, the J-1 scholar.

J) J-1 ADVISER CONTACT INFORMATION & J-1 SCHOLAR ADVISING HOURS

Morgan State University, Center for Global Studies, c/o J-1 Scholar Adviser
Turner’s Armory, Room 208, 1700 E. Cold Spring Lane, Baltimore, MD 21251
(443) 885-4029 ph / (443) 885-xxxx fax / johnson.niba@morgan.edu

J-1 Advising Hours
Tuesday 1:00pm-4:00pm
Thursday 10:00am-12:00pm

K) U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM

Office of Designation
Academic and Government Programs Division
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State
SA-5 5th Floor, 2200 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20522-0505
Phone: 202-632-9310 : Fax: 202-632-2701
LIFE AND CUSTOMS IN THE UNITED STATES

Life and customs in the U.S. can seem similar to your country of origin. There are, however, quite significant differences between our cultures, which you will likely observe during your stay with us. There can be great differences in terms of life and customs throughout various areas of the U.S. as well. This may be noticeable in terms of dialect, fashion, food, language, and what is considered to be polite ways of addressing people. Within one city of the U.S. there can also be great differences, which you may observe in terms of standard of living, economic levels, education, available resources, safety, and culture. Time is another issue that can be different. For work and meetings, Americans are generally very punctual. For dinner parties at someone’s home, casual parties, and meeting friends out at a bar; Americans rarely show up at the exact time that had been discussed. It is usually acceptable to be around 15 minutes late to dinner and 15 minutes to an hour late to casual parties or meeting friends at a social outing. You may pick up on other small differences during your stay. Just do not let yourself get too frustrated with these, in other words, do not sweat the small stuff, enjoy the experience of life and diversity in the U.S instead.

Mail and the Post Office:

The United States Post Offices are generally open Monday through Saturday and they deliver mail during these days except for governmental holidays. The opening hours vary from different offices though. To calculate postage, and to find out other information about the postal system, visit www.usps.com and follow the guidelines. You can send your mail either from the post office or deposit it in blue U.S. mailboxes on the streets. Estimated delivery times:

- Domestic 1 to 7 days
- Northern Europe and South America 7 to 10 days
- Southern Europe 2 to 3 weeks
- Australia and New Zealand 10 to 14 days

We do not recommend sending cash through the mail (it is not legal to do so). For situations where you need to send money, use a check, Western Union or United States Money Order. The latter can be obtained from a bank or a post office and do not cost very much. For urgent mail you can use U.P.S. Express Mail Service or FedEx, both offer “next day” deliver service, and are available seven days a week. For more information see www.usps.com or www.fedex.com.

Shopping:

A supermarket is a large store where you will find most things you need when it comes to food. Supermarkets are often part of a bigger chain that is owned by a large company. Examples of major chains are Giant, Whole Foods, Safeway, Wegman’s, Giant, Target and Wal-Mart. The supermarkets are generally open seven days a week; some of them 24 hours a day. Ask for a customer card, it is provided for free in most of these supermarkets and gives you a (when available) direct discount on your purchase. Most states require that a person is 21 years of age in order to purchase any alcoholic beverage. Be prepared to show proof of your age if you are purchasing alcohol.

Cross Cultural:

Your host institution might be your first entrance to the American culture. We recommend you to participate in the cultural and co-curricular activities that will be planned with you in mind. Check local newspapers and other publications for events in your area. On the Internet you can find information about sport clubs, language courses, hobbies, volunteer activities etc. Other good ways to meet people include taking an evening class, becoming a volunteer or perhaps joining a church. Remember that you will learn from the experience, so stay open-minded and find out the cultural differences and similarities yourself!
Banking:

It is possible to open a bank account and if you get paid a stipend it is probably necessary to do so. There are numerous banks from which to choose. Make sure that you can easily transfer money from your home bank account to your bank account here. The hours vary among banks. They are open Monday through Friday, generally from 9 am to 5 pm, with evening and weekend hours in some of the larger cities in the U.S. Banks are closed on Sundays and federal holidays. Most bank accounts also provide automatic teller machine (ATM) services, which are available 24/7.

Holidays:

The United States has 10 federal holidays. Some states have additional holidays that they observe. On the legal holidays some businesses are closed, mail is not delivered and the schools and banks are closed. If you are planning to travel during the holidays, remember to book well in advance!

U.S. Federal and National Holidays:

- New Year’s Day, January 1
- Martin Luther King Day (observed), January 15
- President’s Day, Third Monday in February
- Memorial Day, Last Monday in May
- Independence Day, July 4
- Labor Day, First Monday in September
- Columbus Day (observed), Second Monday in October
- Thanksgiving, Fourth Thursday in November
- Christmas Day, December 25

Please note that the university does not necessarily close on the date a holiday is observed so please check with the Office of Human Resources, 443-885-3195 or the Center for Global Studies, 443-885-4029 before making plans.

Local Community Resources:

Below you will find specific information for the Greater Baltimore area. Searching on the internet for resources not listed will provide you with other helpful information, and please feel free to contact the Center for Global Studies for assistance.

- City/Regional transit: [http://mta.maryland.gov/](http://mta.maryland.gov/)
- Hospitals: you may do a google search for “hospitals in Baltimore City”
- Schools: [http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/schoolsystems/?WBCMODE=pr%2525%25](http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/schoolsystems/?WBCMODE=pr%2525%25)